Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method for surveying a plurality of users with a sequence of questions that is automatically tailored per user,
5   comprising the steps of:

creating for each of said users a corresponding user profile containing a tailored sequence of questions and corresponding answers;

creating, at least periodically, one or more affinity groups for said users responsive of each of said corresponding user profile, each of said one or more
10   affinity groups having at least one user profile in an affinity group;

associating each user profile with at least one affinity group and, if an association between a user profile and said at least one affinity group does not exist, then creating at least one new affinity group for said user profile, each affinity group containing at least one user profile;

15   presenting each user with a sequence of questions form a source containing a plurality of different questions, said sequence of questions and order of each question in said sequence of questions being independently, asynchronously, and dynamically tailored for each and every user on an individual basis responsive to both an answer received from each individual user to a
20   question previously presented to said individual user and a particular affinity group or combination of affinity groups to which a profile of said individual user is associated; and

storing said user profile of said each user;
the steps repeated at least once more per user.

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2. – 3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein said at least one particular subsequent question from said sequence of questions is presented
30   because of at least one of:

popularity of said subsequent questions within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups;

as a most frequently answered subsequent question within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups; and

5   as a most recently answered subsequent question within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein at least one question is capable of receiving an answer from said user that comprises an open text.

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6. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 5, wherein said open text allows said user to add a new answer value for said question.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 6, wherein said new answer is
15   used as one of a plurality of possible answers to said question when said question is subsequently posed to a second user.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein a question comprises at least two possible answers.

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9. (Original) The method of Claim 8, wherein said user may select more than one answer to said question.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 8, wherein said at least two
25   possible answers are presented because of at least one of:

popularity of an answer within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups;

as a most frequent answer within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups; and

30   as a most recent answer within said particular affinity group or combination

of said affinity groups.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein said method further comprises the step of:

5   filtering said user profile, wherein said filtering comprises the application of a rules engine that compares said user profile to a set of predefined criteria.

12. (Cancelled)

10   13. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 11, wherein said filtering step further comprises the step of:

modifying <u>without user intervention</u> an answer to said question based on at least one of:

predetermined criterion;

15   at least one filtering rule;

consistency with previously answered questions;

consistency with all answered questions; and

consistency with answers of said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups.

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14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein said modification comprises at least one of omission of said answer, and tagging said user profile as inactive.

25   15. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

periodically creating a new affinity group by associating at least one user profile <u>of said users</u> to said new affinity group.

16. – 17. (Cancelled)

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18. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of:
>   providing a report.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 18, wherein generation of said
report is constrained by one or more constraints comprising at least one of:
>   an attribute of said user profile; and
>   a reporting goal.

20. (Original) The method of Claim 19, wherein said goal comprises at least one
of:
>   a profile attribute value;
>   a range of profile attribute values;
>   a Boolean value reflective of a set of values;
>   a Boolean value reflective of a set of non-values;
>   a date range;
>   a minimum count of matching profiles;
>   a maximum count of matching profiles;
>   a question filter;
>   an affinity filter; and
>   a match score threshold.

21. (Original) The method of Claim 19, further comprising the step of:
>   weighting said constraints to provide a match score.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 19, said step of providing said
report comprising the steps of:
>   matching between at least a matchfield of said goal and a corresponding
matchfield of at least one of an affinity group and a user profile, and
>   generating a match score.

23. (Original) The method of Claim 22, further comprising the step of:

      determining at least one best match from a plurality of possible matches.

24. (Original) The method of Claim 23, further comprising the step of:

5   arranging matches by order of match score, said order being grouped to at least two levels of matches, based on said score.

25. (Original) The method of Claim 22, said step of matching further comprising the step of:

10   providing an aggregated score for said matching step; and

      weighting the importance of including said match in said report.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 24, said step of matching further comprising the step of:

15   classifying each match score as one of:

            deterministic to meeting said goal; and

            non-deterministic to meeting said goal.

27. (Original) The method of Claim 19, wherein said goal is any of:

20   a personal goal, wherein said personal goal is a result of a plurality of user inputs pertaining to personal aspirations; and

      an external goal, wherein said external goal is a result of a plurality of arbitrary inputs.

25 28. (Original) The method of Claim 27, wherein said aggregated information comprises statistical information.

29. (Original) The method of Claim 27, wherein a report resulting from a personal goal comprises:

30   a comparison of a user having said user profile to at least one of:

a plurality of user profiles; and

an affinity group.

30. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method for performing a
compensation survey of a plurality of users with a sequence of questions that is
automatically tailored per user, comprising the steps of:

creating for each of said users a corresponding user profile containing a
tailored sequence of questions and corresponding answers;

creating one or more affinity groups for said users responsive of said
corresponding user profile, each of said one or more affinity groups having at least
one user profile in an affinity group;

associating each user profile with at least one existing affinity group and, if
an association between a user profile and said at least one affinity group does not
exist, then creating at least one new affinity group for said user profile, each
affinity group containing at least one user profile;

presenting each user with a sequence of questions from a source
containing a plurality of different questions, said sequence of questions and order
of each question in said sequence of questions being independently,
asynchronously, and dynamically tailored for each and every user on an individual
basis responsive to both an answer received from each individual user to a
question previously presented to said individual user and a particular affinity group
or combination of affinity groups with which a profile of said individual user is
associated;

and

storing said user profile of said each user;

wherein said affinity group comprises at least one of:

profession;

compensation;

compensation range;

experience;

experience range;

position; and

position range.

5   31. – 47. (Cancelled)

48. (Original) The method of Claim 30, further comprising the step of:

providing a compensation report.

10   49. (Original) The method of Claim 48, said compensation report is constrained by

at least one of:

an attribute of said user profile; and

a reporting goal.

15   50. (Cancelled)

51. (Original) The method of Claim 49, said goal comprising at least one of:

a desired compensation;

a desired range of compensation;

20   a desired geographic location;

a desired firm; and

a desired range of firms.

52. – 56. (Cancelled)

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57. (Original) The method of Claim 49, said goal comprising any of:

a personal goal, wherein said personal goal is a result of a plurality of user

inputs pertaining to personal aspirations; and

an external goal, wherein said external goal is a result of a plurality of

30   arbitrary inputs.

58. (Original) The method of Claim 57, said personal goal comprising at least one of:

      compensation;

5   compensation range;

      salary;

      salary range;

      geographic location;

      position; and

10   position range.

59. (Cancelled)

60. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 30~~59~~, wherein <u>a report displaying</u>

15 ~~said~~ statistical information comprises at least one of:

      average salary;

      median compensation;

      median salary;

      salary percentile;

20   standard deviation;

      trend;

      profile count;

      most frequent compensation; and~~s~~

      most frequent salary.

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61. (Cancelled)

62. (Original) The method of Claim 30, said compensation comprising at least one of:

30   annual salary;

monthly salary;

weekly salary;

hourly rate;

bonus;

5   tip;

benefits; and

vacation time.

63. – 91. (Cancelled)

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92. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method for surveying a

plurality of users with a sequence of questions that is automatically tailored per

user, comprising the steps of:

presenting each user a sequence of questions that is independently,

15   asynchronous, and dynamically tailored for each and every user of the plurality of

users on an individual basis from a source containing a plurality of different

questions, each user's answer to each of said sequence of questions being stored

in a corresponding user profile;

determining, periodically an affinity of each of said corresponding user

20   profile to compensation within one or more affinity groups, wherein each affinity

group comprises a plurality of user profiles and wherein a user profile corresponds

to at least one affinity group;

receiving answers from each user;

storing said sequence of questions and corresponding answers in a unique

25   user profile for each user;

determining if a corresponding affinity group exists for said user profile and,

if so, associating said user profile with at least one or more affinity groups, ,

otherwise creating at least one new affinity group and associating said user profile

with said new affinity group;

30   filtering said user profile, wherein said filtering comprises the application of

a rules engine that compares said user profile to a set of predefined criteria;

modifying an answer if it is inconsistent with at least one of:

said user profile; and

said affinity group;

5   wherein determining an appropriate next question for said sequence of questions to be presented to said user on an individual basis, said appropriate next question, and a specific order in which said sequence of said questions are presented to each said user, being determined on an individual, user-by-user basis based on at least a particular affinity group or combination of affinity groups

10   to which said user profile is associated and an answer to a previously presented question.

93. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 92, further comprising the steps of:

15   at least periodically checking all user profiles; and

attempting to generate at least an affinity group, wherein said affinity group comprises at least a user profile.

94. – 95. (Cancelled)

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96. (Previously Amended) The method of Claim 92, wherein a next question in said sequence of questions is determined based on at least one of:

popularity of said question within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups;

25   a most frequently answered question within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups; and

a most recently answered question within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups; and

in relation to said question.

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97. (Original) The method of Claim 94, further comprising the step of:

    querying any of a database of a plurality of user profiles and a database of a plurality of affinity groups for a statistical report.

5 98. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 97, wherein said statistical report comprises at least one of:

    average salary;

    median compensation;

    median salary;

10   salary percentile;

    standard deviation;

    trend;

    profile count;

    most frequent compensation; and

15   most frequent salary.

    99.– 110. (Cancelled)

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